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## THE RACES OF BRITAIN

*The Races of Britain; a Contribution to the Anthropology of Western Europe.* By John Beddoe, M.D., F.R.S., &c. (London: Trübner; Bristol: Arrowsmith. 1885.)

**B**ELIEVING that after thirty years of labour his opportunities for observation are not likely to add much to his store of facts, or materially alter their significance in his own eyes, Dr. Beddoe has brought together his numerous contributions to the ethnology of the British Isles, and, with the addition of much new matter, has arrayed them before us in such a manner as to show his own conclusions, and to form "some small part of a solid platform" whereon future anthropologists, with antiquaries and philologists, may ultimately build a more complete and certain structure.

Dr. Beddoe's mode of procedure is to make extensive observations on the physical characters of the present inhabitants of our islands, and on those of the adjoining parts of the Continent which are the reputed cradles of the various elements of our race, and to compare the results with the records of history as far as they are available. The physical characters to which he attaches most importance are colour of hair and eyes, head-form, and stature, and of these he has collected a very large number of observations on a systematic plan, and hence the "numerical method" of studying anthropology which he first inaugurated in 1853, and which has since been largely followed by continental observers. Dr. Beddoe attaches most importance to colour, because he believes that "the colour of the hair is so nearly permanent in races of men as to be fairly trustworthy evidence in matters of ethnical descent; and that nearly as much may be said for the colour of the eyes." With regard to head-form he complains of the great dearth of measurements of modern British skulls, the skulls in our museums being chiefly those of criminals, lunatics, and paupers, and therefore of little value; and he finds from personal experience that the accurate measurements of living heads are alike difficult to make and to obtain. He supplies tables, however, of a considerable number of measurements of heads obtained by himself or his friends in different parts of the country. The statistics of stature and weight collected by Dr. Beddoe have been dealt with in a separate essay, and as they were incorporated with others of a similar kind collected by the Anthropometric Committee of the British Association, and published in their final report for 1883, they are, therefore, not republished in his present volume.

It is to his extensive observations on the colour of the hair and eyes that Dr. Beddoe chiefly trusts for his analysis of the racial distribution of our existing population, and for the purpose of more convenient and definite comparison he adopts a formula which serves as an "index of nigrescence." Having classified the colour of the hair as red (R), fair (F), brown (B), dark (D), and black (N), "the gross index," he says, "is gotten by subtracting the number of red and fair-haired persons from

that of the dark-haired, together with twice the black-haired. I double the black, in order to give its proper value to the greater tendency to melanosity shown thereby; while brown (chestnut) is regarded as neuter, though most persons placed in Class B are fair-skinned, and approach more nearly in aspect to the xanthous than the melanous variety:—

$$D + 2N - R - F = \text{index.}$$

From the gross index, the net, or percentage index, is of course easily obtained."

Dr. Beddoe is quite alive to the want of uniformity in the manner of observing, to the different significance of the terms employed for the colours of hair and eyes, and to peculiarities in observers themselves, but as the data he makes use of were collected by himself, the personal equation of the observer and the terms employed are constant. He does not explain the principle on which his classification of colour of hair and eyes, is based, and it would seem to be the result of combinations which his very extensive observations have suggested as the most constant and consistent with each other and with other physical characters, as he claims for it a closer appositeness for defining racial distinctions than other schemes. It differs from the plans of Virchow, Vanderkindere, and Kollmann, and other continental anthropologists, and from that of the Anthropometric Committee, which is based on the simple anatomical arrangement of pigment in and on the surface of the iris, hair colour being deemed of secondary importance both from the difficulty of diagnosis and its greater changeableness with age.

Dr. Beddoe's account, extending over eleven chapters, of the prehistoric races, and the various conquests of the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Danes, and Normans, and the fresh blood which they introduced into the country, is very fully and impartially rendered. The natives of South Britain at the time of the Roman conquest, according to Dr. Beddoe, "consisted mainly of several strata, unequally distributed, of Celtic-speaking people, who in race and physical type, however, partook more of the tall blond stock of Northern Europe than of the thick-set, broad-headed, dark stock which Broca has called Celts. . . . Some of these layers were Gaelic in speech, some Cymric; they were both superposed on a foundation principally composed of the long-headed dark races of the Mediterranean stock, possibly mingled with fragments of still more ancient races, Mongoliform or Allophylian. This foundation-layer was still very strong and coherent in Ireland and the north of Scotland, where the subsequent deposits were thinner, and in some parts partially or wholly absent . . . no Germans, recognisable as such by speech as well as by person, had as yet entered Britain."

Dr. Beddoe appears to hold a middle place between the writers who believe, on the one hand, in the extermination of the native races by the Anglo-Saxons, and on the other in their extensive survival in all parts of the country; while he attaches more importance to the new blood introduced by the Danes and Normans than is commonly admitted.

The portion of the work devoted to an analysis of the racial elements of the present inhabitants of the British Isles and adjoining countries of Western Europe consists

of a very large number of tables showing the distribution of the colour of hair and eyes according to the "index of nigrescence," and to a less extent to the head-forms, from the author's personal observations; and of second series of colour of hair and eyes of military deserters illustrated by maps constructed on the plan of the Anthropometric Committee. There are also tables showing the relation between complexion and disease collected at the Bristol Infirmary; and numerous illustrations are given showing the physiognomy of males and females which the author believes to be typical of the various racial elements at present surviving among us.

Of the conclusions which Dr. Beddoe draws from all these observations it is impossible to give a summary here. He examines the whole country, district by district and county by county, from the Shetlands to Cornwall, and the reader must consult the work itself to see how far the author has succeeded in the task he has set himself, and to what extent he has prepared a solid platform for his successors in the same field of inquiry. It is most probable that Dr. Beddoe's conclusions, based as they are on a minute acquaintance with the history of the conquests and settlements of the country, and on a wide personal survey of the population in most stationary situations, will be accepted by anthropologists as the best results and the nearest approach to the truth which is attainable at the present day. On the other hand it is doubtful whether Dr. Beddoe's confidence in colour as a permanent racial character will bear the test of future inquiry, and whether his method will be accepted as sufficient when the questions of prepotency of stock, relative viability of dark and blond persons, and the influence of sexual selection have been more completely investigated. The Jews of Europe are isolated and preserved as a separate race by the sterility or low fertility of their mixed marriages, and the question of hybridism in the human race has received little attention from anthropologists. The function of reproduction is the most highly specialised and the most easily disturbed, and it is probable that the dying out of races is due more to this cause than to the "vices of civilisation" to which they are commonly attributed. American statistics show that the blond type is more subject to all the diseases, except one (chronic rheumatism), which disqualify men for military service, and this must obviously place blonds at a great disadvantage in the battle of life, while the popular saying, "a pair of black eyes is the delight of a pair of blue ones," shows that sexual selection does not allow them to escape from it. It is more than probable, therefore, from all these considerations, that the darker portion of our population is gaining on the blond, and this surmise is borne out by Dr. Beddoe's remark that the proportion of English and Scotch blood in Ireland is probably not less than a third, and that the Gaelic and Iberian races of the west, mostly dark-haired, are tending to swamp the blond Teutonic of England by a reflex migration—a fact not without significance to others than anthropologists at the present time.

The "Races of Britain" gives a very imperfect idea to those who are unacquainted with such inquiries, of the labour, time and thought expended on its production, but anthropologists who know how to estimate such work at

its full value will welcome it with great satisfaction as the most exhaustive account of the ethnology of our country which has appeared in recent years.

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### OUR BOOK SHELF

*Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society.* Vol. 21, Part II., Series II. (London: John Murray, 1885.)

THE second part of the current number of this *Journal* opens with the second instalment of Mr. Fream's report upon Canadian agriculture. The climate, soil, and products of Eastern Canada, comprising the better-known States of Ontario, Quebec, and the maritime provinces, are chiefly dealt with, whereas, in the first report, prairie farming, and the almost untrodden regions of the north-west were particularly dealt with. The principal object of the report is to show the capabilities and rapid progress of Canada, and this is achieved by numerous statistics as to production and exports. In these provinces the first fertility of the soil has been in a great degree exhausted, and as a consequence mixed farming with the maintenance of live stock, and the use of improved processes, is taking the place of consecutive corn-growing. The growth of the dairy industry is a remarkable fact, and in the management of their cows and the manipulation of the products of the dairy, more attention is apparently paid to the teachings of science than is usual in the mother country. The exports of cheese have increased from 6,000,000 pounds per annum in 1870, to 76,000,000 pounds in 1884. The butter trade has long been stationary, owing to the uncertain demand for Canadian butter. The Canadian cattle trade has also increased by leaps and bounds from a gross number of 6940 head in 1877, to 61,843 in 1884. The report is full of details of personal experience gained from many settlers in all parts of Old Canada. Names and addresses of the principal farmers, dairymen, and stock-breeders, are given with great frequency, and confer a special value on the report as a guide to intending settlers.

A large portion of the *Journal* is occupied with official reports of the Preston meeting of the Society (1885), including the report upon the prize farms in Lancashire. These last reports are less interesting than usual to practical men, as the Lancashire farmers are exceptionally placed, and conduct their business upon suburban principles of management. The sale of farm produce directly to the town consumer and the carrying back of town manure is the marked feature. Rents appear to range particularly high for the present depressed state of trade and agriculture, and are generally from fifty to sixty shillings per acre.

The customary reports of the Steward upon live stock and implements, and short memoirs of the late Sir B. T. B. Gibbs and Sir Watkin W. Wynn, close this section. A summary of the Commission's Report on Technical Education, 1884, and a reprint from the Report of the Pennsylvania State Board of Agriculture, 1883, occupy some fifty pages, the latter reviving M. Guénon's curious theory with regard to indications of milking properties in the peculiar distribution of hair on the buttocks, known as the "escutcheon."

Among original articles indicating research, those of Miss E. Ormerod on the ox-warble and the warble maggot, of Prof. Robertson upon rickets in sheep, and of Mr. Clement Stephenson upon abortion in cows may be mentioned. Lastly, the number contains a contribution from Rothamsted upon the valuation of unexhausted manures, in which the results of past experiments are brought to bear upon the claims of outgoing tenants for compensation under recent Acts of Parliament.